

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 058480

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SCUL, IN, US
SUBJECT: NORTON SIMON NATARAJ

1. IN TALKS WITH TIKKI KAUL AND ERIC GONSALVES MARCH 20-21, NORTON SIMON DECIDED TO TAKE THE HIGH ROAD AND AGREED IN PRINCIPLE ON THE RETURN OF THE NATARAJ TO INDIA IN THE INTEREST OF IMPROVING INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS, PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL EXCHANGE, PREVENTING SMUGGLING OF ART TREASURES, ETC, ETC. TIKKI KAUL SAID GOI WOULD WELCOME SIMON'S OFFER AND PREPARED COOPERATE WITH HIM IN WORKING OUT A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENT. KAUL ALSO SAID GOI WOULD BE HAPPY TO PARTICIPATE IN NORTON SIMON EXHIBITION AT THE MET MUSEUM AND SEND OVER NUMBER OF PIECES TO BE ADDED TO SIMON COLLECTION.

2. OVERALL CONCEPT REMAINS FUZZY, BUT SIMON'S LAST THOUGHTS WERE FOR FOUR YEAR SHOW IN MET (PRESUMABLY OPENING THIS FALL), FOLLOWED BY TWO YEARS IN WASHINGTON, TWO YEARS IN LOS ANGELES, AND TWO YEARS AT SOME OTHER CITY. AFTER THIS (I.E. ABOUT 1984) NATARAJ WOULD RETURN
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TO TAMIL NADU. SIMON, HOWEVER, AGREED TO IDEA OF

"SYMBOLIC RETURN" OF NATARAJ FOR SHORT PERIOD BEFORE THEN.

3. DETAILS WILL BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN GONSALVES, MACFARLANE AND KUX. STILL TO BE SETTLED ARE QUESTIONS OF HOW MUCH INDIAN ART SIMON TO RECEIVE AS COMPENSATION, POSSIBLE

ARRANGEMENT FOR SENDING WESTERN ART TO INDIA, SCENARIO ON PUBLICITY AS WELL AS NUMBER OF LEGAL QUESTIONS. HOWEVER, ONLY REMAINING MAJOR HURDLE FROM SIMON'S STANDPOINT NOW SEEMS TO BE WILLINGNESS OF METROPOLITAN MUSEUM TO COOPERATE IN STAGING EXHIBITION WITH SUFFICIENT FLOURISH. IN CASE THERE PROBLEMS ON THIS SCORE, WE AND INDIAN EMBASSY AGREED TO TRY TO ENLIST FULL SUPPORT OF MET ONCE FORMAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN EMBASSY AND SIMON REACHED. KISSINGER

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